

NEWS RELEASE

**OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF ILLINOIS**

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For Immediate Release

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Ronald J. Tenpas, United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today the indictment of 13 individuals in two separate federal indictments that address methamphetamine production in and around Franklin County, Illinois. Eleven of the thirteen are in custody after pre-dawn arrests on Wednesday and Thursday.

Those arrested in the first indictment that was handed down by the federal grand jury are: **Greg L. Slack**, 40 and **Lana L. Slack**, 36 of 200 West Nettie Street, Sesser, Illinois. **Chad H. Heiman**, 30, and **Tammy J. Heiman**, 29, of PO Box 1, US Hwy 154, Sesser, Illinois, **Cory D. Gunter**, 26, of 102 West Johnson Street, Valier, Illinois, and **Bradley L. Baker**, 38, currently housed in the Illinois Department of corrections and formerly of 802 Joplin Street, Benton, Illinois. One of the individuals indicted in the case remains at large and their identity is not yet being released.

Greg Slack, Chad Heiman, Tammy Heiman, Gunter, and Baker are all charged with conspiracy to produce and distribute methamphetamine. **Greg Slack** and **Lana Slack** and **Chad Heiman** and **Tammy Heiman** are also charged with using their respective residences to produce and distribute methamphetamine. **Chad Heiman, Greg Slack** and **Baker** are also charged with possessing methamphetamine manufacturing precursors on various occasions.

The indictment alleges that the violations took place between the summer of 2000 until March 2004 in Franklin County, Illinois. If convicted by a jury, all defendants face a minimum of 10 years imprisonment up to life imprisonment, a four million dollar fine and at least 5 years of probation.

An indictment is a formal charge against a defendant. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

The lead agency in the first case was the Illinois State Police-Southern Illinois Drug Task Force, along with the Sesser, Illinois Police Department, the West Frankfort Police Department, Franklin County State's Attorney William Richardson, The COMIT drug task force, the Franklin County Sheriff's Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the United States Marshals Service, the National Guard and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Those indicted in the second indictment by the federal grand jury are: **Gary D. “Downtown” Brown**, 48, currently housed in the Illinois Department of Corrections and formerly of 713 East Taylor, Benton, Illinois, **James A. Taylor**, 38, 107 Joplin Street, Benton, Illinois, **Kurtis D. Mateycak**, 24, currently housed in the Kentucky Department of Corrections and formerly of 16880 Morgan Street, Logan, Illinois, **John H. Jones**, 28, 604 Farris Street, Carterville, Illinois, and **Deborah K. Wright**, 604 Ferris Street, Carterville, Illinois. One of the individuals indicted in the case remains at large and their identity is not yet being released.

The defendants are all charged with conspiracy to produce and distribute methamphetamine. The indictment also alleges that the six charged defendants were involved in methamphetamine production with “others indicted elsewhere” including Rene Kerkemeyer, Blakely Sullivan, Miki J. Lampley, Dustin E. Forby, Shawn B. Loftus, Jamie B. Eldridge, Jonathon B. Eldridge and Robert E. Hartley. All of those individuals have previously been indicted and sentenced to imprisonment for terms of from three to over ten years imprisonment. **Mateycak** is also charged with unlawful possession of firearms by a convicted felon. **Brown** is also charged with possession of cocaine with intent to distribute. The indictment alleges that the violations took place between the November of 2000 and September 2003 in Franklin County and Jefferson County, Illinois. If convicted by a jury, all defendants face a minimum of 10 years imprisonment up to life imprisonment, a four million dollar fine and at least 5 years of probation.

The investigation in the case occurred over several years and involved several agencies. The lead agency in the second case was the COMIT Drug Task Force, and the indictment of **Jones** and **Wright** is an outgrowth of the earlier **Dustin Forby** investigation which had been conducted by the Illinois State Police-Southern Illinois Drug Task Force and the Drug Enforcement Administration. Others participating in the investigation were the Franklin County State’s Attorney, the West Frankfort Police Department, the Franklin County Sheriff’s Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, the Johnson County Sheriff’s Office, the Paducah, Kentucky Police Department, the St. Louis County, Missouri Sheriff’s Office, the San Diego County, California Drug Task Force, the Illinois State Police Crime Lab and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

Both cases are being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Tom Leggans.